TALLAHASSEE SENIOR SERVICES

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) Safe Travel

Traveling During COVID-19 Outbreak

Traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic, whether within your home state, interstate or internationally, should be avoided if possible! The best way to avoid contracting the virus is through social distancing. The longer you are exposed to someone with the virus, the greater your viral load and the higher the likelihood of becoming seriously ill. Traveling, and traveling by air in particular, will increase your exposure to COVID-19, and while certain safety practices can help make it safer, individuals at a higher risk of developing severe symptoms should avoid traveling at this time. **Do not travel if you are sick.**

If you must travel within the United States, start by checking the CDC COVID Data Tracker to see if the virus is actively spreading where you are going, as well as within your own community. Not only could you be risking infection yourself, but also unknowingly spreading the virus to others while you travel. The data tracker is available here: cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/. Whether traveling by air, bus, train, car or RV, the primary concern is your proximity to others during your trip. Bus and train travel involve standing or sitting within six feet of others for extended periods. While car and RV travel often involve contact with other individuals at gas stations and restaurants, as well as the use of public bathrooms. Frequently touched surfaces can also be a source of infection. Wear a mask and clean your hands often to reduce your risk. Check out the CDC's Coronavirus Considerations for Travelers and COVID-19 Traveler Info Card for more detail, as well as the Wall Street Journal article All Your Coronavirus Travel Questions Answered.

Air Travel

Airlines have developed protocols and procedures for enhanced sanitation and attempts at social distancing, but practices vary from airline to airline. Contact the airline you plan on flying with directly, to find out what they are doing to keep people safe. **All airlines require that travelers wear a mask.** Additional information, including resources from individual airlines, can be found at faa.gov/coronavirus/. Federal and state guidelines are changing constantly, be sure to check the most up-to-date recommendations before you fly.

- Make check-in and luggage drop off contact-free by checking in online and using your phone as a boarding pass. If you must physically check in, do it at a kiosk. Experts recommend carrying bags on rather than checking them; if you must check a bag, look for contactless options. More luggage recommendations can be found at washingtonpost.com/travel/tips/new-rules-packing-bag-during-pandemic/.

- Bring a plastic zip bag of items, like your ID, that others will be handling, and another zip bag to place these items in once they have been sanitized.

- Select a window seat to minimize close contact with others during the flight.

- Bring a bag of disinfecting wipes and hand sanitizer. Clean your hands often, and wipe down any frequently touched surfaces, arm rests, tray tables, etc.

- Once seated, do not get up until you are ready to exit the plane, and try to avoid using the restroom.

More information can be found at cnn.com/travel/article/is-it-safe-to-fly-yet/ or washingtonpost.com/travel/tips/airport-flights-covid-risk/. Traveling, even by air, can be made safer, but the risk remains. Facemasks, social distancing, disinfecting wipes and hand washing are not completely effective. **If you or anyone in your household is at an increased risk for severe symptoms from infection, travel should be avoided.**